



# FIRST THINGS FIRST

## First Things First External Evaluation Proposed by the Arizona University Consortium December 2, 2008

### Introduction — Ron Marx (UofA)

- Historic collaboration among the three ABOR institutions
  - Allows state to have the best and the brightest doing this work
  - Builds capacity in each of the institutions in the area of early childhood education and evaluation
- Charge given by FTF staff
  - Design and implement a longitudinal data gathering process that can assess effectiveness of early childhood initiatives across the state (Qualitative and Quantitative Longitudinal Data Gathering and Assessments)
  - Design and implement a cross sectional data gathering process that provides information regarding kindergarten readiness on a annual basis (Cross sectional Study of Kindergarten Readiness)
  - Provide information regarding the status of early childhood initiatives across the state (GIS study)
- Description of Arizona Early Childhood Institute (AzECI) — [See Attachment #3]

### Description of Longitudinal Study

- *Quantitative Study*
  - Accelerated Longitudinal Design
    - Strengths of this approach
      - Allows comparisons of cohorts as increasingly more FTF services become available
    - Data gathered from three cohorts of children
      - Birth, Age 3, Age 5
    - Follow up assessments of these students in subsequent years
      - Birth (at age 3, age 5, and age 8)
      - Age 3 (at age 5 and age 8)
      - Age 5 (at age 8)
- *Qualitative Study*
  - Allows for more contextualized analyses and emphasis on ecological approaches
    - Brings children's and families' voices into the research analyses

- Utilizes ethnographic, case study, narrative analysis, semi-structured interviews and focus groups, and document and discourse analysis
- Especially useful in assessing family engagement with children's success and access to and use of health care and high quality child care
  - Interviews over time document the impact of increased number and quality of services to children and families

#### **Description of Cross Sectional Study**

- Through trend analysis, will evaluate changes in children's skills, capabilities, and well-being when they enter kindergarten
  - Will include mutually agreed upon measures of school readiness
  - Will include measures of children's health and wellness

#### **Description of Geographic Information Systems (GIS)**

- GIS can provide visual representations of the status of early childhood measures mapped at the community level and matched with important attributes of those communities (obtained from census data)
  - Create a central data repository for information related to early childhood care, education, and health
  - Provide access to the information via a web portal that features interactive charts, maps, and graphs that can be accessed by early childhood professionals across the state
  - Regular updates of data which can provide visual maps of changes in early childhood services and programs across the state
  - Provide data analyses, maps, and graphics for the research team and for the FTF board and professional staff`

### Budget Recommendation

FTF staff recommends the acceptance of the longitudinal study External Evaluation proposed by the University Consortium as detailed below:

Budget Period	Dates	Major Deliverables	Funds Requested
I	01/01/09 – 06/30/09 (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kindergarten readiness assessment focus groups</li> <li>Identify schools to participate in kindergarten readiness assessment</li> <li>Hire Executive Director and Director of Evaluation</li> </ul>	\$2,063,426
II	07/01/09 – 06/30/10 (12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1<sup>st</sup> kindergarten readiness data collection (1200 children)</li> <li>1<sup>st</sup> wave data collection on infants, preschoolers and kindergarten students (7484 children)</li> <li>1<sup>st</sup> annual report to FTF Board</li> </ul>	\$7,227,718
III	07/01/10 – 06/30/11 (12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on 1<sup>st</sup> wave and initial kindergarten readiness data</li> <li>1<sup>st</sup> wave data collection on families and children</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment (1200 children)</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> annual report to FTF Board</li> </ul>	\$3,500,915
IV	07/01/11 – 06/30/12 (12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> wave data collection on infants, preschoolers, and kindergarten students (5257 children)</li> <li>Report on 2<sup>nd</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment</li> <li>3<sup>rd</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment (1200 children)</li> <li>3<sup>rd</sup> annual report to FTF Board</li> </ul>	\$6,433,837
V	07/01/12 – 06/30/13 (12 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4<sup>th</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment (1200 children)</li> <li>Report on 2<sup>nd</sup> wave data collection and 3<sup>rd</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> wave data collection on families and children</li> <li>4<sup>th</sup> annual report to FTF Board</li> </ul>	\$3,379,786
VI	07/01/13 – 12/31/13 (6 months)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Report on 4<sup>th</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment</li> <li>5<sup>th</sup> kindergarten readiness assessment (1200 children)</li> <li>3<sup>rd</sup> wave data collection on infants, preschoolers and kindergarten students (2979 children)</li> <li>5<sup>th</sup> annual report to FTF Board</li> </ul>	\$4,521,681
<b>Total</b>	<b>01/01/09 – 12/31/13 (60 months)</b>		<b>\$27,127,363</b>